

**RARGOM Board Meeting
University of Massachusetts, Boston
Troy Conference room on the 2nd floor of Wheatley Hall**

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Minutes

Present: J. Annala (chair), I. Babb, K. Friedland, W. Galloway, Linda Mercer, J. Pederson, J. Runge, L. Rutter, M. ten Brink, Gordon Wallace,

The meeting started just after 10:00. The Chair welcomed Judy Pederson, Manager, Center for Coastal Resources at MIT Sea Grant, to the board meeting for the morning discussion. He explained that the usual discussion of member news around the table would take place during lunch, in order to take advantage of Dr. Pederson's perspectives on coordination of regional organizations.

Gulf of Maine Council Coordination Meeting

RARGOM is now represented on the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment by John Annala and Rob Stephenson. Leslie Ann McGhee is chair of the GoMC and also of this GoMC coordination meeting. She is also a representative on NROC.

The meeting took place in Halifax with US and Canadian participation. J. Annala provided a synopsis. The purpose was to explore regional coordination and perhaps consolidation of the various groups and associations with the Gulf of Maine. Discussion points were: 1) is there a problem with integration, 2) challenges to barriers- what are the restraining forces?, 3) Identification of broad opportunities that would come with coordination/consolidation and 4) Project initiatives to facilitate future integration.

A discussion about the definition of NROC and GoMC roles followed. NROC is connected to the Governor's Council. GoMC never really had that interaction, although the GoMC has the formal Canadian connection. Also, by inviting RARGOM representation, the GoMC is seeking scientific advice from a regional body. The GoMC goals focus on habitat, contaminants, industry, whereas the NROC emphasis overlaps NERACOOS: HAB, Water Quality, Storm Surge, Buoys.

Is there a role that RARGOM could productively play in NROC and GoMC? J. Annala, R. Stephenson and L. Mercer (Maine DMR) are intersecting representatives. It was suggested in discussion that RARGOM could continue to play role like it did for GoMC.

J. Annala will contact the chair of NROC to describe what RARGOM does and to look into convening a theme session around one of their focus areas.

Report on NERACOOS developments

J Runge provided a brief update on developments in NERACOOS, the Northeast Regional Association for Coastal Ocean Observing Systems. The advisory committee for NERACOOS had its last meeting in November, 2007. The advisory committee commented (but had no decision-making authority) on the governance structure for NERACOOS, which will be run by a 21 member board. Seven directors will be nominated by the Academic Consortium (presently U Maine, UNH, U Conn, URI, U Mass Dartmouth, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Bedford Institute of Oceanography (DFO Canada), seven directors will be nominated by Sea Grant and the final seven directions by NROC. NERACOOS is presently supported by a grant on which WHOI (J. Trowbridge) is lead PI. There are limited funds, distributed in partial support for 6 out of 11 original GoMOOS buoys, for the Long Island Sound buoy system (LISICOOS- U Conn) and a coastal buoy (UNH), some physical ocean modeling (by SMAST, which replaced UMAINE), some funding for nutrient analysis (to URI), some to outreach and some to GoMOOS for an administrative role.

W. Galloway pointed out that at the beginning that IOOS was to be part of the National Monitoring Network – not clear what would the connection to IOOS is now.

R. Beardsley gave a quick update on Orion. It is in its final review (sort-out this year) by the Consortium of Ocean Leadership. The pioneer array to the shelf break would be the first to be funded, with a focus on shelf break exchange. He also reported that S. Gallagher (WHOI) is leading development of a benthic observatory, for which 5 regions doing periodic surveys twice a year (with P, Auster) using a sled and high resolution digital cameras, side scan and mosaic techniques with GOOGLE help. The observatory has a website page.

Activities of the Gulf of Maine Regional Ocean Science Council

J. Pederson reported on the Sea-Grant initiated Gulf of Maine Regional Science Council. This represents a SeaGrant response to the Pew Ocean Commission Report. There is funding from the National office to establish regional research management plans, as a way to get collaborative research going and planning. An example study is the spread of invasives across the sea floor: tunicates (sea squirts). The SeaGrant proposal is to use an acoustic sensor for high quality seafloor mapping; and it is collaborating with Bill Schwab and Larry Mayer (UNH) for mapping areas for potential habitats and sensing and assessment of tunicate spread.

The ACZISC report was noted (ACZISC Secretariat. 2006. Overview of current governance in the Bay of Fundy/Gulf of Maine: Transboundary Collaborative Arrangements and Initiatives. Oceans and Coastal Management Report. 2006-05. Fisheries and Oceans Canada).

There is a need to make explicit the answer to the question, “How can science be used to better manage ecosystems services and goods?”, especially for prediction of outcomes of management decisions.

It was suggested that RARGOM develop a Theme Session on Regional coordination of initiatives in the GoM region.

Gulf of Maine Science Symposium in 2009

J. Annala provided an update on the RARGOM GoM Science Symposium that is planned for October 4-9 at the Algonquin Hotel in St. Andrews, which is providing the meeting venue at a very competitive rate. An Organizing Committee was formed, consisting of J. Annala, R. Stephenson (co-chairs), J. Runge, V. DeLauer (COMPASS, a cosponsor) and L. Rutter. Lara Cooper who works at the St Andrews Biological Station with R. Stephenson has the main organizer role.

A Science steering committee composed of approx. 16 members providing broad regional representation and expertise was named by the OC. The steering committee provides guidance on the structure, format and content of the meeting.

The proposed overarching goal for the symposium is to advance the science that supports the future management of the Gulf of Maine. The symposium program will (1) inform participants of the current objectives, constraints, and future influences on management of marine resources, (2) inform participants about the state of scientific knowledge in the Gulf of Maine, and (3) identify scientific requirements and directions to meet future needs from an ecosystem-based approach.

Discussion from the board included the following points (in no particular order):

- There is a need to have emphasis on the science and not just the applications of the science
- Provides a forum for scientists to show their research results
- Engage community groups to see how science is being applied
- As a keynote address: what we now know and how it could be applied to integrated coastal zone management.
- Make sure it is not just a Gulf of Maine summit.
- Highlight new opportunities that management could take advantage of.
- Identify the barriers and how to span them: how to connect research to management.
- Ask from managers: what one or two things have new science advances given you?
- Ask from scientists: what are you doing and what progress have you made that can be implemented in management?
- Plenary review talks: where have we come in the past decade?
- Where has knowledge actually been put into place in management decisions? How has it worked?
- Provide a list of success stories- something that could be disseminated by RARGOM. Send in your stories and get travel paid by RARGOM. Example is .g. MWRA management, with the capability now to hindcast and forecast.
- Contrast where we were from the last RARGOM science session to where we are now: a plenary talk and paper. HABS, Coupled models.
- Census of Marine Life wants to tie in meeting with this meeting.

- Symposium goal is focused on science- to emphasize this.

Regional Activities

WHOI:

- has new director
- FVCOM has funding from NERACOOS for modeling atmosphere coastal ocean. Search and Rescue Demonstration sites and also GoMOOS splashover with Maine Weather service .Use the regional forecast model to predict storm surge with Scituate, Mass and Saco, Maine as examples.

EPA: Landscape ecologist to be hired

NOAA: RV Pices is launched. 64 m boat to SE Fisheries Science Center.

UCONN:

- Is looking for research assistant with engineering background, electrical engineer preferred.
- Possibility to get NOAA research vessel, Bigelow, into GoM to map Jordan Basin for deep water corals – It can operate an ROV to 2200 m depth.

UMassB: Reorganizing marine department.

- G. Wallace has a position open for a postdoctoral research associate.

GMRI:

- Looking for population dynamics modeler, preferably 4 yr experience
- New research initiatives: impact of midwater trawls on herring schools. K. Friedland noted that information is available to correlate herring with fronts – go to NE Center website in 2006 under Kevin Friedland.

Theme sessions

The Role of Shipboard Sampling in the Gulf of Maine Observing System

J Runge reported on planning for this theme session, scheduled for Friday, May 2 at the Univ of New Hampshire. The one day theme session will focus on observing system needs for shipboard sampling in the Gulf of Maine. While many variables describing the state of the Gulf of Maine are amenable to remote or autonomous sensing, others, such as ocean chemistry, abundance and composition of zooplankton and ichthyoplankton and production rates of ecosystem processes, still require sampling at sea and measurement in shipboard and coastal laboratories. Shipboard sampling activities related to coastal ocean observing may include: collection of data for times series at fixed stations, groundtruthing remote sensing data, collection of data for model parameterization and validation, detection of climate change, and use of ship collected data for testing and calibrating new automated instrumentation.

Keynote presenters include C. Johnson (DFO Canada), B. Balch (Bigelow), J. Hare (NOAA), J. Salisbury (UNH), D. Anderson (WHOI), C. Hunt (Battelle).

Along-Shelf and Across-Shelf Linkages Between Nearshore and Coastal Ocean Ecosystems

This theme session is being organized by J. Runge, L. Incze and G. Wallace. No substantial progress has been made since the last board meeting. While there is still interest in holding the session, it will probably not take place until the latter part of 2008.

Discussion about this workshop highlighted the importance of the subject. The latest versions of the 3-D finite volume coastal ocean model (FVCOM) developed by SMAST (C.Chen) have very high resolution for resolving coastal dynamics. Remote hyperspectral sensing of the nearshore has been done. There is a need for studies of benthic pelagic coupling, especially near shore. The Mass DMF and Maine DMR inshore trawl surveys for juveniles may be useful as a complement to NMFS surveys.

There was discussion about how to encourage and facilitate new theme sessions.

- There is a need to make theme sessions better known.
- Theme sessions can be marketed as highly valuable.
- Perhaps new facilities on website to encourage theme sessions.
- The theme sessions need not be formal.
A function of theme sessions could be to springboard to full blown workshop or symposium.
- Theme sessions are a unique RARGOM function.
- Think about sliding scale for registration: cheap for members, not so cheap for non members.
- Need to put specific contact information associated with each theme session

K. Friedland agreed to make some suggestions for the next Board meeting; others are encouraged to think about how to improve the theme session role of RARGOM.

Articles of Association

The articles of association were reviewed. J. Annala will put in latest revisions for consideration at the next board meeting.

Other business

The possible association of RARGOM with the Northeast Marine and Great Lakes Laboratories (NEAMGLL), a subgroup of NAML, was discussed. This may be a mechanism for greater participation in public policy. RARGOM should explore that idea. It will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

What can RARGOM can do to increase membership and useful products? There is a need to sell RARGOM to new members.

The possibility of raising Associate Member dues, which have remained constant, or decreased in the past 10 years, was discussed. There is the possibility as well of setting up supporting member dues.

Next meeting time and date

Set for Maine DMR, Boothbay Harbor on Friday June 27.

Minutes prepared by J. Runge